

## **Frequently Asked Questions In-season Closure of Commercial Yellowtail Snapper Harvest in the South Atlantic November 2015**

### **What does the in-season closure of South Atlantic yellowtail snapper commercial harvest do?**

- The in-season closure of yellowtail snapper prohibits the commercial harvest or possession of yellowtail snapper in South Atlantic federal waters beginning at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on October 31, 2015.
- Federal waters will reopen to recreational harvest at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on January 1, 2016.

### **Why is this closure necessary?**

- The reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act required that NOAA Fisheries and fishery management councils established annual catch limits to prevent overfishing (rate of removal from the population is too high), and accountability measures such as in-season closures to help prevent overages of catch limits.
- The commercial annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper is 1,596,510 pounds whole weight.
- Reports indicate that landings have met the 2015 annual catch limit.
- This is the first time this fishery will close since NOAA and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council implemented annual catch limits for managed species.
- For more information on annual catch limits see [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/acl\\_monitoring/documents/pdfs/acl\\_monitoring\\_faqs\\_jan15.pdf](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/acl_monitoring/documents/pdfs/acl_monitoring_faqs_jan15.pdf).

### **Where can I find the commercial landings for yellowtail snapper?**

- Commercial landings can be found on the Southeast Regional Office's Web site at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>.

## What are the monthly commercial landings for yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico?

Monthly commercial landings of yellowtail snapper in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic.

Month Of Year	Gulf of Mexico	South Atlantic
	Commercial Landings (lbs)	Commercial Landings (lbs)
1 (January)	14,496	94,073
2 (February)	7,780	89,435
3 (March)	25,414	198,019
4 (April)	45,756	236,152
5 (May)	44,230	197,769
6 (June)	58,425	239,666
7 (July)	30,752	156,285
8 (August)	24,297	114,367
9 (September)	35,661	139,489
10 (October)	27,041	119,436
Total Landings (lbs)	313,852	1,584,691
Commercial Annual Catch Limit (lbs)		1,596,510
Percent of Annual Catch Limit Landed		99.26

## Is the South Atlantic Council going to change yellowtail snapper management?

- Regulatory Amendment 25 to the Snapper-Grouper Fishery Management Plan is under development by the South Atlantic Council and includes management measures for yellowtail snapper.
- The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is considering a change to the start date for future commercial yellowtail snapper fishing seasons to ensure harvest is open during the holiday season and perhaps have it closed during the summer months when these fish are spawning.
- The Council is scheduled to take final action on this change at their December 2015 meeting in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.
- If approved by the Council, NOAA Fisheries would work to implement this measure sometime in 2016.